DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 434 865 SO 031 068

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TITLE The Depiction of Native Americans in Recent (1991-1998) Secondary American History Textbooks.
PUB DATE 1999-00-00
NOTE 42p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *American Indian Culture; *American Indians; Content Analysis; Secondary Education; Social Studies; *Textbook Content; *Textbook Evaluation; Textbook Research; *United States History
IDENTIFIERS Authenticity; *Native Americans

ABSTRACT

As a follow-up to studies by R. Costo and J. Henry (1970) and J. Loewen (1995), this study examined 12 current secondary level U.S. history textbooks to evaluate their accuracy in depicting Native Americans. The criteria embodied an authenticity guideline based upon the "Five Great Values" (generosity and sharing, respect for elders and women, getting along with nature, individual freedom and leadership, and courage) with a rating scale between one (lowest) and five (highest). Results indicated that only three of the textbooks rated above average. Though generally textbooks have improved in terms of quantity of cultural information, better treatments must be pursued that reflect more accurate and comprehensive accounts. The challenge lies in assisting educators' acquisition of knowledge and familiarity with native cultures as they are depicted in textbooks, an endeavor that will further assist in adopting/utilizing proper textbooks. Contains 2 tables of data, 3 endnotes, 28 references, and the "Native Cultures Authenticity Guideline." (BT)

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The Depiction of Native Americans in Recent (1991-1998) Secondary American History Textbooks

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Abstract

This study examined twelve secondary American history textbooks to evaluate their accuracy in depicting Native Americans as a follow-up to studies by Costo and Henry (1970) and Loewen (1995). The criteria embodied an authenticity guideline based upon the Five Great Values with a rating scale between one (lowest) and five (highest). The results indicate that only three of the textbooks rated above average. Though generally the textbooks have improved in terms of quantity of cultural information, better treatments must be pursued that reflect more accurate and comprehensive accounts. The challenge lies in assisting educators' acquisition of knowledge and familiarity with Native cultures as they are depicted in textbooks, an endeavor that will further assist in adopting/utilizing proper textbooks.

Introduction

Many social studies educators utilize a variety of sources and innovative strategies to effectively teach the various disciplines of the field. With varying degrees of success, educators have thoughtful objectives, provide a solid environment for learning, and keep students engaged as they are taught issues and concepts borne of a vision of high expectations. But this vision begins and is dependent upon subject matter that is powerful and challenging (Parker and Jarolimek, 1997).

Though some of us employ numerous sources, the profession recognizes that social studies educators are especially reputed to rely heavily on the textbook as the primary and in perhaps too many cases sole source for instruction (Fitzgerald, 1979). Despite its acknowledged shortcomings and even assertions from publishers that it was never intended to be the sole depository of knowledge, the textbook continues to be misconstrued in many quarters as THE curriculum (Parker and Jarolimek, 1997). This is especially true in the case of the bellwether of the social studies: history.

In light of this decades-old attack, history textbooks in particular have undergone few significant changes and are still "little more than repositories of dates, names, and facts" (Tomlinson, Tunnell, and Richgels, 1993, p.52). Content coverage is broad and shallow, many times glossing over controversial issues at best. The writing format remains overly expository featuring language restraints reflected by limited sentence length and vocabulary. Worst of all, perhaps, individuals and groups are depicted as lifeless and one-dimensional, resulting in a flat, uninteresting reading experience.

However, publishers and writers are claiming to have made efforts to improve the status of the history textbook. Development shows evidence of a wide range of authors

and consultants, resulting in text that generally reflects current thinking and knowledge, and making for effective use from adoption to adoption. Covers are attractive and appealing. Illustrations, tables, figures and maps are numerous, relevant, functional, and provide balanced representation in terms of race, sex, and socioeconomic status. Reading levels are reputed to be more grade-appropriate as a result of increased attention to writing style, neutral language, and reinforcement of selected skills.

But perhaps the chief concern is the content, whose coverage must be adequate, balanced, and accurate. Much of this thrust has been the result of the rise of multiculturalism (Sanchez, 1997a). Minorities, women, and cultural groups have demanded recognition in the American Experience. One of their missions has not just been increased inclusion reflecting their contributions, but more importantly an accurate perspective reflecting both positive and negative realities to reduce myth and stereotype (Sanchez, 1997a).

In many regards, this remains a serious problem in the conventional textbook. Studies indicate that racial/ethnic representation in textbooks has significantly increased in terms of quantity, but ironically and conversely other studies clearly document that racial/ethnic histories and perspectives are consistently distorted (Fitzgerald, 1979; Sanchez, 1997a). These distortions will be perpetuated as truth until educators teach otherwise, i.e., challenge a myth or stereotype and replace it with truth. But educators may be generally unaware of inappropriate and inaccurate depictions of cultural groups. The common problem remains one of taking for granted that a depiction is true simply because it is in the book (Fitzgerald, 1979). The bias we encounter is represented by distortion, omission, overrepresentation, romanticized portrayals, and t[illegible]enism (Sanchez,

1996). Such bias is being reduced somewhat, but educators must be willing to evaluate their texts and challenge discrepancies, contradictions, and lack of depth.

The question of how educators can validate cultural accuracy in textbooks implies a task that begins with a serious attempt to learn about and understand selected cultures. This will demand that we seek outside sources and/or an evaluation guideline. To aid in this process, there are indeed existing guides that can acquaint educators with traditional values and traditions and can be utilized to determine accuracy (Sanchez, 1997b). This is especially true for Native Americans, perhaps the most popular and misconstrued culture.

The accurate depiction of Native Americans in textbooks and other instructional materials has long been questionable (Costo and Henry, 1970; Loewen, 1995; Sanchez, 1997). With the assistance of thirty-two Native scholars and historians, Costo and Henry (1970) evaluated over 300 textbooks and readers copyrighted 1950-1970 which were all in current use in elementary and secondary schools in 1970. The books were categorized as American history and geography, state and regional history, government and citizenship, American Indians, world history and geography, and readers. Utilizing a set of general criteria similar to those used in this study, they concluded that:

...Not one could be approved as a dependable source of knowledge about the history and culture of the Indian people of America. Most of the books were, in one way or another, derogatory to the Native American. Most contained misinformation, distortions, or omissions of important history (p.11).

This was obviously a scathing attack on textbooks as instruments of learning about Native peoples. Acknowledging the power of and reliance on textbooks by educators, they further noted:

There is a difference between a book for general readership, and one accepted for classroom use. In the first case, the individual has a choice, and this choice we must protect. It is part of our freedom. The student, on the other hand, has no choice; he is compelled to study from an approved book. In this case, we have a right to insist upon truth, accuracy, and objectivity (p.11).

Costo and Henry certainly hoped that their study would raise such an outcry that the falsification and inaccuracies of Native history via textbooks would become a national issue. Evidently it did, but:

Despite the growing clamor demanding that the textbooks be corrected, it is utterly disheartening to note that very little change has come about. The new books still contain gross inaccuracies, distortions of history, and misconceptions as to the role of the Indian in the story of our country. New and more sophisticated methods of teaching have been introduced, that is true. But despite these new approaches... the basic content of instructional materials about the American Indian continues to be inaccurate and distorted. The situation has not changed (p.8).

Twenty-five years later, Loewen (1995) conducted a thorough study of the overall truth and accuracy of twelve secondary (junior high to college) American history textbooks copyrighted 1974-1991. One of the foci of his study centered on the depiction of Native peoples and cultures. Although he noted that "there has been some improvement in textbooks' treatment of Native peoples in recent years" (p.91) and that "today's textbooks at least try to be accurate about Indian culture" (p.92), he succinctly concluded that the improvement and accuracy were minimal as a matter of wholesale omission. He thus concurred with Costo and Henry that the situation had not

significantly changed. But have the textbooks of the 1990s improved in terms of truth, accuracy, and objectivity concerning the Native Experience?

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine twelve current (1991-1998) American history textbooks presently or recently utilized in Indiana public schools in order to evaluate their accuracy in depicting Native Americans. The textbooks are utilized on the middle school and high school levels and include six texts that cover the entire scope of American history, one that focuses on 20th century America, three that focus on events through 1877, and two that begin after the Civil War era. They average 877 pages in length and over five pounds in weight. Table 1 indicates text titles, authors, and publication date.

INSERT TABLE 1 HERE

Several criteria will be utilized, notably through the understanding of traditional Native American values and traditions as perceived and practiced by representative Native cultures. This perspective is based upon the Five Great Values, which formed the authenticity guideline used in this study. The Values were first proposed by Reiten (1995) based upon the work by John Bryde, refined by this author, and have been utilized to assess the accuracy of Native American trade books that depict Native peoples (Sanchez, 1999). Interscorer reliability and content/construct validity of the guideline were established in the aforementioned study (2). The Values include: generosity and sharing; respect for elders and women; getting along with nature; individual freedom and leadership; and courage. Supplemented by several statement/question sources (Costo and Henry, 1970; Harvey, Harjo, and Jackson, 1990; Caldwell-Wood and Mitten, 1992;

Barclay, 1996; Slapin, Seale, and Gonzales, 1996), the model is applicable to the major Native cultures but should not be construed as implying that Native cultures were or are uniform or, perhaps worse, to promote the "Noble Savage" image whereby the Native American is somehow completely helpful to the Anglo at the apparent forfeiture of his own culture. Various subtopics within each Value help cover the many shared facets between and among cultures, but research will also reveal a unique variance of certain ceremonies, garb, and practices from tribe to tribe. Native cultures are assuredly varied amongst one another, in some ways profoundly, but the model helps anchor the common facets in such a way as to guide the educator in assessing accuracy. Some cultures are also very protective of specific practices; thus, depictions may not always be accurate but nevertheless contain some element of authenticity.

INSERT TABLE 2 HERE

Procedure

Each textbook was read and examined for depictions and descriptions of Native peoples spanning the American experience. The authenticity guideline initially measured evidence of the Five Great Values. These basic headings contained numerous subcategories within each of the Values, which further assist in focusing upon pictures/photos, stereotyping, respectful language, tokenism, historical distortion and/or omission, lifestyle, and gender roles. Specifically, the guideline was utilized to determine if a textbook featured a range of accurate depictions.

No textbook was realistically expected to utilize all or nearly all of the items, but rather an accurate accounting of items encompassing the five headings to depict a multidimensional perspective of Native Americans. No heading or Value carried more

weight than others, but a text was not "condemned" simply because of omission or the presence of a stereotype. Indeed, as Barclay (1996) notes:

...The act of scouring books in search of stereotype violations can lead to a checklist mentality that allows a critic to automatically recommend or condemn a book without troubling to consider the really difficult question of whether or not the book perpetuates untrue or harmful ideas about Native Americans (p.561).

Though his remarks are aimed at non-textbook writing, his point is well taken.

As objectively as possible, each textbook was then assigned a rating between zero (blatantly poor, obvious omissions, insulting, widely stereotypic, and/or inaccurate depictions) and five (numerous, comprehensive, and accurate aspects in all five or at least four of the headings resulting in a comprehensive and multidimensional depiction). A rating of three designated a satisfactory depiction.

Results

Table 1 indicates the final ratings of the evaluation. No textbook received a positve or negative extreme of five or zero. Three textbooks rated a 1, indicating a sketchy, distorted, and generally poor depiction of Native cultures. Two of these texts did not focus on the entire scope of American history but further neglected an accurate contemporary depiction. Four of the textbooks received an average rating of 3, indicating a generally acceptable and accurate depiction encompassing at least three of the five headings but falling short of a comprehensive treatment. Only one of the texts in this group (*America: The People and the Dream* (Divine, Breen, Fredrickson, and Williams, 1991) dealt with the full scope of American history. Three of the textbooks received a rating of 4, indicative of a more comprehensive, fairly accurate and generally consistent

coverage of Native cultures and individuals which included items in at least four of the headings. Interestingly, these texts, along with the average-rated *Why We Remember: United States History Through Reconstruction* (Viola, 1997), made more of an attempt to include narrative (as opposed to the conventional expository) format, which may help account for their ability to be more accurate and comprehensive. Four textbooks received an "average/satisfactory" rating of 3, indicating accurate depictions in at least three headings, while the remaining two were rated a "less than satisfactory" 2.

All of the textbooks shared a number of commonalities, none of which were surprising. All indexed either "Native Americans" (9 of the texts) or "Indians" (3 of the texts). All of them also indexed individual Native Americans, tribes, and cultures to varying degrees. Invariably, they all indexed a "generic set" that includes most or all of the following: Pocahontas, Sacajawea, Tecumseh, Geronimo, Sitting Bull (mistakenly identified in several of the texts as "Chief" when in reality he was a supreme medicine man), and Squanto; and events including Little Big Horn, Wounded Knee, the Trail of Tears, Navajo code talkers, and the American Indian Movement.

Another commonality among the textbooks was an early overview format. All of the texts began with an overview of Native cultures in the first and/or second chapter. These overview ranged from comprehensive (*The American Nation* (Davidson and Stoff, 1995) to terribly brief and sketchy (Not surprisingly, the three textbooks starting from the post-Civil War era and the 20th century, which ranged from two to twelve pages. Though mindful that these texts had a different focus from the rest, their overall depictions were at best less than satisfactory.). Although it was poorly-rated (2), *Exploring American History* (O'Connor, 1994) devoted its entire five-chapter, thirty-seven-page first unit to a

general overview of Native cultures, while the higher-rated (4) *America's Past and Promise* (Mason, Garcia, Powell, and Risinger, 1997) presented in its first chapter an interesting and comprehensive cultural overview spanning to modern day.

The issue of quantity was also a commonality. Each of the texts featured much more line-by-line information, photos, and drawings about Native individuals and cultures than previously published texts of the 1970s and 1980s (1). The increase can be quantified in terms of pages, ranging from as few as two (hardly a great quantity, admittedly) to nearly seventy, and the increased number of photos and drawings found within those pages. In point of fact, the texts "went out of their way" by comparison to increase coverage/contributions not only by Native Americans, but also African Americans, Hispanics, Asian Americans, and women. No doubt this trend can be attributed to the rise of multiculturalism in American society with racial/ethnic groups demanding an equal voice. But while there is no question that quantity has increased, the issue is one of quality: Is the information accurate and comprehensive? Does it simply promote stereotypes? Is it culturally bland or insulting?

So while quantity of coverage increased, there existed the paradox of brevity and lack of depth as major factors differentiating the higher and lower rated textbooks. There were additional factors as well (such as omission and inaccuracy), but this factor proved to be a major player in the five lowest-rated textbooks and contributed to a distortion of history that drastically underplays or even omits Native struggle and sovereignty. For example, *Exploring American History* (O'Connor, 1994) describes the Plains culture in four short paragraphs that mention seven nations (whose names, it is pointed out, were given to them by Europeans), the buffalo, tepees, and the horse. Though it makes an

effort to note the roles of spiritualism, respect for the harmony of nature, and the family unit, it falls far short of properly depicting the sophistication and complexity of Native cultures. The reader is then led to believe that these cultures virtually disappeared with no contemporary ties.

Similarly, *The American Nation* (Boyer, 1995) provides only 2-4 paragraph vignettes of Native cultures, which overemphasize Native Americans as warriors who, though actively resisting the invasion of European settlers and the government, evidently accepted defeat quite easily. Native personalities, such as they are portrayed in the guise of Chief Joseph and Squanto, are further seen as directly or indirectly assisting their invaders in their own demise as virtually willing victims of exploitation. The great Nez Perces chief is too often depicted as "giving up the fight" and dying "of a broken heart" (Davidson and Stoff, 1995, p.520). Ten of the twelve textbooks mention Squanto. Three of the ten even detail his earlier capture and kidnapping to England and who, upon his return, befriended the Pilgrims, interpreting for them, teaching them agricultural survival, and helping to maintain peaceful Native-White relations. Several of the books, such as the higher-rated *The American Nation* (Davidson and Stoff, 1995), refer to him as "a special instrument sent of God" (p.89), yet none of the books note that he did so "to the detriment of his own people" (Costo and Henry, 1970, p.207).

Omissions are common. The exploitation of Sitting Bull and Geronimo by the Wild West Shows is fairly well known but none of the textbooks refer to their embarrassing fates at the hands of their captors. The true contributions of Native cultures are also generally overlooked, such as their profound knowledge of herbal medicines and their expertise as farmers. Especially concerning the fact of land ownership, examples of

omission and distortion due to lack of depth are common in the poorly-rated texts and readily appear to be paragraphs that are awkwardly added on as fillers.

Another factor contributing to low ratings is the distorted connotation that Native American spiritualism and traditions are anchored in primitive superstition and out of any context of societal or personal need. The depiction of the Sun Dance Ceremony is a frequent example, lacking any understanding of the relationship between respect for rituals and the role of spiritualism in the daily lives of Native peoples. Likewise, authentic garb gives way to generalization of one style, which merely perpetuates the stereotype of feathers and breechcloths. Although most of the textbooks gamely speak of separate cultures, nations, and tribes, only the higher-rated texts make a serious attempt to portray the uniqueness of Native cultures through garb, language, customs, and lifestyles through defined and sophisticated depictions.

The origin of Native peoples is consistent, but in a negative way. All of the books in the sample adamantly state that the First Americans (at least they get that compliment and the acknowledgement that they were living here before Columbus "discovered" them and mistook them as Asian Indians) crossed the land bridge of Beringia and filtered down the continents, making it clear that Indians are direct descendants of Asians. With the exception of *The Americans* (Danzer et al., 1998), no other possibility or route is considered, completely ignoring hypotheses that they may have come from a number of places and directions (such as western or eastern water routes), a finding that concurs with Loewen (1995). Danzer et al. (1998) at least entertains the notion that the land bridge may not have been the sole route.

These First Americans are also referred to as nomads in four of the books (Boyer, 1995; Divine et al., 1991; O'Connor, 1994; and Viola, 1997). This implies a people without a complex culture, without technology, and without land or occupancy rights (Costo and Henry, 1970). This is simply wrong.

That Native cultures simply vanished via conquest and disease is yet another factor that negates connections to the present. The poorly-rated textbooks clearly imply that Native cultures were non-existent over huge gaps of time, appearing sporadically at best in a paragraph or two, and lamenting that only names, art, and artifacts remain as vestiges. Native peoples in the past tense is a common feature with one notable exception: *America: Pathways to the Present- Civil War to the Present* (Cayton, Perry, and Winkler, 1995) presents a fine five-page account of contemporary Native life, complete with photos that nearly depict Native Americans as genuine individuals. The problem, unfortunately, is that the account suddenly and abruptly presents Native Americans as forgotten people whose disappearance from history after 1890 remains unexplained and without a foundation from the past that links to the present.

The First Value/Heading: Generosity and Sharing

The essence of the six subcategories within this heading is the notion that Native Americans were/are a selfless people who shared the bounty of Mother Earth and are encouraged to share as uniquely separate individuals as well as distinctive tribal members. On this latter point, all of the textbooks index and mention distinct tribes and individuals, but to varying degrees. The poorly-rated (2) *Exploring American History* (O'Connor, 1994) indexes nine tribes and about the same number of individuals, but does not differentiate them via cultural depth. For example, the Sioux tribe "did not want to

live on reservations," and "refused to change their lives and give up the land that was rightfully theirs" (p.347). After Little Big Horn and ultimate surrender, the Sioux "now were forced to give up their lands and move to reservations"(p.348). But there is no attempt to promote an understanding of the complexity of the Sioux and their counterparts of the Plains culture, save for their generic reliance on buffalo and tepees. This is typical of the lack of depth exhibited in the lower-rated texts. By contrast, the higher-rated (4) *The American Nation* (Davidson and Stoff, 1995) devotes over nine pages of text alone on the Sioux and the Plains culture, emphasizing the richness and variations that include differing languages, religion, lifestyles, cooperation, the role of women, and other traditions. Similarly, *The Americans* (Danzer, Klor de Alva, Wilson, and Woloch, 1998) goes into depth that includes the value of individualism as well as cooperation.

Concerning the former point of a sharing people who fervently believe in sharing the bounties of the earth, the top nine textbooks accurately describe this concept within the contexts of culture. Of these, *The History of the United States: Beginnings to 1877* (Mason, Jacobs, and Ludlum, 1997) and *The Americans* (Danzer et al., 1998) do the most comprehensive job, even going into depth about the intricacies of sharing not only the bounties but also the sharing of responsibility as a value for family and children. The three lowest-rated textbooks made no mention of this concept.

One might think that a giving, sharing culture would be an attractive alternative to the peoples who encountered Native cultures and in point of fact, Black slaves and even some Spanish settlers sought out and assimilated into Native cultures for these reasons

(Loewen, 1995). However, none of the textbooks in this sample mention the attraction of Native cultures to Africans or Europeans.

The Second Value/Heading: Respect for the Elders and Women

The five subcategories within this heading deal directly with the elderly and their valued status within Native cultures. This is among the more difficult headings for the conventional textbook to deal with, as it seems "easier" to accurately depict it in commercial trade books. None of the lower-rated (1 and 2) textbooks dealt with the issue. Among the satisfactory-to-higher-rated (3 to 4) textbooks, only *America: The People and the Dream* (Divine et al., 1991), *The American Nation* (Davidson and Stoff, 1995), and *America's Past and Promise* (Mason et al., 1997) accurately and comprehensively portray the wisdom of elders as something to be both respected and learned.

This heading also explores appropriate gender roles, which include the woman's revered role in a noncondescending manner that goes beyond the conventional portrayal of mother and wife, basket maker and buffalo tanner. The satisfactory-to-higher-rated (3 to 4) textbooks accurately expand on gender roles to varying degrees. The better examples include the renditions found in *The American Nation* (Davidson and Stoff, 1995) and *America's Past and Promise* (Mason et al., 1997), the latter doing a superb job of providing a modern-day continuity of the political power held by Native women. These texts portray the gender roles in an equal balance of prescribed duties and responsibilities while avoiding stereotypes. Again, the lower-rated textbooks virtually overlooked this opportunity.

The Third Value/Heading: Getting Along With Nature

With fifteen subcategories, this is not only the largest heading but also the most misconstrued at face value. It implies an environmental respect but goes much deeper. The Native Americans' relationship to the land was and is sacred. This ecological reverence is at least attempted in all but the three lowest-rated textbooks. The range of coverage in the top nine texts predictably varies. For example, *America: Pathways to the Present- Civil War to the Present* (Cayton et al., 1995) relates an ambiguous and shallow relationship:

Although Native Americans might give away possessions as gifts, they never traded away land. In their view, the land could not be owned. They believed that people had a right to use land and grant others the right to use it too. But to sell land outright, as people did at the time and as we do today, was unthinkable to Native Americans (p.14).

Just as ambiguous is the passage found in *American History: The Early Years to 1877* (Ritchie and Broussard, 1997):

Native Americans tried to live in harmony with nature and the land. They believed no one person could own land. Land was shared by all members of a nation- not bought, sold, or passed down through inheritance. Many Native American beliefs and traditions are still observed by Native American groups today and are shared by other Americans as well (p.46).

What these beliefs and traditions are would greatly support this assertion and the questions that it raises, but nothing more is discussed. This same text promotes a further common misconception by inferring that Native peoples were compulsively ecological:

...They lived in villages along streams and rivers, where they built homes of sod and farmed the riverbanks. Their crops included corn, beans, squash, tobacco, and

sunflowers. During the summer, they left the villages to hunt buffalo herds that roamed the plains. Native Americans used all parts of the buffalo. The people ate the buffalo meat and used the hides for clothing and cone-shaped tents, called tepees. They also used the buffalo bones for tools, cooking utensils, and ceremonial purposes (p.49).

Contrast the above with the more exemplary example in *History of the United States: Beginnings to 1877* (Mason et al., 1997), which uses the ecological concept as a springboard to explore the spiritual. The passage notes a spiritual relationship with the Earth and supports this attitude toward the world, the land, and its human and non-human inhabitants with a treatise by a Kiowa poet. The passage concludes by setting the stage for further inquiry based upon the Native relationship to the land.

Indians believed, in other words, that all things were part of a larger whole. They also believed that each life form had certain powers. Establishing the right relationship with an animal or plant, stone or star, storm or cloud meant a person could share its spirit or essence. As a result, even hunting was not just an economic activity. It was also a spiritual activity. To an Indian, success in the hunt not only reflected individual strength. It also meant that a creature had given up its life. The hunter acknowledged that gift and thanked the creature's spirit (p.17).

This is still somewhat flat, but the insight helps to extenuate the usually generic "conflict over land" philosophies between Native cultures and the encroaching White settlement.

But the issue of land ownership affords no apparent improvement over previous textbooks. Most of the books denote the Native attitude toward land, i.e., it was sacred, could not be bartered or individually owned, etc., in varied degrees. Yet none of the

books boldly asserts that the land was stolen from them. Most of the accounts, in fact, skirt the issue:

England's colonization of North America would be steady and relentless. Just as steadily, the Indians would continue to defend their right to live where they chose. For almost three centuries, frontier warfare would be part of the American experience (Mason et al., 1997, p.118).

As more colonists settled... they took over lands used by Native Americans for thousands of years. As a result, fighting often broke out between white settlers and Indian nations... The pattern of English expansion followed by war between settlers and Indians was repeated throughout the colonies. It would continue for many years to come (Davidson and Stoff, 1995, p.98).

Disagreements between Native Americans and white settlers over land use eventually led to war. The settlers' use of land threatened the Indian way of life, the very basis of their culture. In the end, the whites won because of their superior numbers and superior technology (Mason et al., 1997, p.18).

Notice that no where in the above three passages is it actually stated that Indians *owned* the land and that it was *stolen* from them. In fairness, several of the books present William Penn's view that the Indians owned the land and should be paid for it, but this is generally the only reference to Indian ownership of the land and even then infers that it only applied to lands in Pennsylvania. The closest to a bold statement is found in *America: The People and the Dream* (Divine et al., 1991):

The Indians became alarmed as land-hungry whites poured into the West. The new settlers did not care whether the Indians were hunters, farmers, or planters. Nor did

they distinguish between Indians who attacked the invading whites and those who tried to live in peace with them. All that concerned most whites was that the Indians *occupied* [italics added] land the whites wanted.

...Many Indians... were bribed, tricked, or threatened into signing unfavorable treaties in which they gave up the rights to a group's land... (p.288).

Occupation is not the equivalent of ownership. Signing something unfavorable resulting in giving up rights is not clearly theft. The fact remains that the Indians owned the land and that it was stolen from them repeatedly. The textbooks evidently lack the courage to state this.

Loewen (1995) noted in his study that Indian land was the basis for several wars, among others the War of 1812, and the issue of the Louisiana Purchase, i.e., the land did not belong to France but rather the Indians. None of the textbooks in his study or this one mention the Native claim in these incidences.

Spirituality and ceremonial rituals are cornerstones of Native cultures, past and present. These aspects are for the most part depicted in a respectful manner in all but the lowest-rated textbooks. The tone is what is critical here in terms of grounding Native spirituality and rituals in the context of their cultures and without primitive and/or superstitious connotations. The best of these renditions are, not surprisingly, found in the two highest-rated textbooks, but even here they are still flat and somewhat lacking. These texts describe ceremonies such as the Sun Dance (which the lower-rated texts distortedly depict as tortuous), the Green Corn Dance, and the Mixed Kachina Dance with a respectful understanding of tradition and religion that transcends into the present. One average-rated text, *America: The People and the Dream* (Divine et al., 1991), has as

its chief strength accurate descriptions and depictions of various rituals supported by primary source inserts.

Garb, artifacts, and dwellings have long and often been a consistent source of distortion. Too often the reader concludes that all Native peoples lived in tepees, for the most part, and wore feathers and headdresses. The satisfactory-to-high-rated textbooks go far in clarifying these distortions with accurate drawings, photos, and descriptions that delineate various cultural differences and similarities. The top nine textbooks also feature specified and authentic Native garb in relation to the culture. Just as importantly, these texts depict the Native American wearing contemporary mainstream garb.

The accurate depiction of Native cultural artifacts is another aspect that has been improved in these textbooks. Items such as the coup stick, the totem, wooden canoes, kachinas, turquoise, sandpaintings, the travois, the medicine pipe (not "peace pipe") and the war bonnet, among many, belong to distinct Native cultures. Most of these texts do at least a satisfactory job of authentically presenting the origin and purpose of these artifacts.

Native cultures developed a variety of dwellings to suit their differing environments. Yet in the past there was a tendency to blatantly overemphasize the Plains tipi as the dwelling of choice. The higher-rated (4) *America's Past and Promise* (Mason et al., 1997) does indeed note this variety, but it still devotes the vast majority of its dwelling pictures on tepees. Generally, the satisfactory-to-higher-rated texts explore the varied technology of the pueblo, long house, hogan, tipi, wigwam, and wickiup, noting how each was culturally reflective of the environment.

A major complaint about the conventional textbook is its failure to portray Native Americans as contemporary cultures and not a "dead" people who no longer exist. The three textbooks that deal specifically with the modern era, namely, *America: Pathways to the Present- Civil War to the Present* (Cayton et al., 1995), *American History: The Modern Era Since 1865* (Ritchie, 1997), and *The American Nation in the 20th Century* (Boyer and Stuckey, 1998), theoretically have the opportunity to present a comprehensive contemporary picture of Native cultures and the issues that affect them, such as those spearheaded by AIM. Disappointingly, only Cayton et al. manages this task and manages it reasonably well, but as forementioned the account suffers somewhat from a lack of grounding in the past linking to the present. The latter two texts, along with the poorly-rated *The American Nation* (Boyer, 1995) and the less-than-satisfactory-rated *Exploring American History* (O'Connor, 1994), fail miserably in their at-best sketchy attempts at a contemporary depiction.

The seven satisfactory-to-higher-rated textbooks, on the other hand, do a passable job of contemporary depiction. Somewhat surprisingly, the three average-rated texts which end at the Reconstruction Era present the best of these through solid links between the past and present. Notable is the account in *Why We Remember: United States History Through Reconstruction* (Viola, 1997) which provides the most consistent and comprehensive linkages in terms of art, language, and religious practices.

Perhaps the greatest shortcoming found in this heading is the recognition of the humanness of Native peoples, i.e., laughing, playing games, being with family and friends, etc. None of the textbooks depicted a laughing Native American, one who appeared to be enjoying himself/herself in a contextual situation. To varying degrees, all

of the other major racial/ethnic groups were indeed depicted in this manner, however briefly. Only *America's Past and Promise* (Mason et al., 1997) and *The American Nation* (Davidson and Stoff, 1995) come close by depicting and describing Native children at play, but even here the focus is on the games and not the enjoyment of the participants. This non-depiction needs to be corrected in order to avoid the stereotype of the always-serious and stoic Native American.

The Fourth Value/Heading: Individual Freedom and Leadership

The principle behind the three subcategories of this heading is not so much the freedom factor as it is with leadership. A common misconception long promoted by popular media is the notion that a single chief, regaled with a magnificent war bonnet, reigned supreme over a tribe. In truth, a tribe likely had several chiefs, each of whom served as a leader in a specific situation, i.e., chief of the hunt, of war, of the harvest, of ceremonies, etc. The real power in a tribe, however, rested with a Tribal Council. It was (and is) the Council that nominated, chose, or removed chiefs from power. Further, many of these Councils were composed of and/or controlled by women, who clearly played an integral and respected role. A brief example is found in *The American Nation* (Davidson and Stoff, 1995):

Women had a special place among the Iroquois. The owned all the property in the long house. Also, they were in charge of planting and harvesting crops. Like a Pueblo man, an Iroquois man moved in with his wife's family when he married. Iroquois women also held political power because they chose the sachems, as tribal chiefs were called (p.46).

A similar example can be found in *America's Past and Promise* (Mason et al., 1997):

Women had title to the land through families and clans. It was the women... who nominated political and religious leaders. They required that the leaders be honest and have the best interests of the people in mind.

According to the Great Law of Peace, clan mothers could remove a chief who abused his office... (p.21).

This is also one of the very few texts to link the leadership concept to Wilma Mankiller, who since 1985 has been a principal chief of a major North American Indian nation. It must be noted, however, that the concept of Native leadership is handled somewhat simplistically by the guideline. One must take into account that the differences in political organization among the varied cultures were in some instances immense, much greater in fact than the differences between a monarchy and a republic. Historically, democratic institutions have followed elements offered by Native cultures. Yet none of the textbooks mention this fact.

While none of the twelve textbooks presents a clear picture of the multiple chiefs concept, six of them do acknowledge the proper roles of leadership in terms of a council, chief, and the women's power in the process. Not surprisingly, the three lowest-rated textbooks miss a golden opportunity to depict this cultural norm and obliterate a stereotype.

The Fifth Value/Heading: Courage

At first glance, this heading and its five subcategories are easily misinterpreted to imply a focus on the warrior aspect. In truth, this concept has wide connotations that are

symbolic of the interrelatedness of life. Courage was a matter of protection and overcoming fear. But within this concept is the reverence for life. As apprehensive of battle as any other culture, Native American courage was a matter of giving and sharing for the benefit and protection of the people, and never a "savage" or "fanatic" endeavor.

Generally, the seven satisfactory-to-higher-rated textbooks put the Native struggle for honor, sovereignty, and self-determination against conquest in a proper perspective through active resistance. Nevertheless, there is still a tendency to overemphasize and glorify the battle aspect and the victimization of Native cultures as a result. Commonly found are descriptions and narratives of "bloody battles," "tragic conflicts," and "massacres," but only as terminology denoting the defeat of Native peoples by Euro-American aggression. In this respect, the textbooks in this sample no longer blame Native peoples for all of the violence, which concurs with Loewen's (1975) sample. Interestingly, these texts "soften" their depictions of Native resistance by virtually justifying the endeavor of warfare. For example, the three top-rated texts refer to the Sioux role in the infamous Battle of the Little Big Horn as one of "outflanking" and/or "overpowering" Custer's forces; an interestingly different use of words.

In a more modern context, courage is equated with patriotism. Native Americans have served in the American armed forces in disproportionately high numbers, as military service is still a major way to protect their people. The only implied reference to this, however, is the generic inclusion of World War II's Navajo code-talkers, an episode most of the textbooks present.

Moreover, however, the modernistic stance of courage stresses that one must take the risk of a courageous action or decision while remaining humble in the process. This

aspect of courage is difficult for the non-Native American to understand because of the stigma attached to failure. For the Native American, however, failing merely represents the opportunity to again strive for success. But this aspect is not depicted in any of the textbooks.

A final subcategory in this heading is the distorted depiction that Native cultures and achievements were inferior, thus necessitating the intervention and rescue of the "superior" European civilization. In this era of political correctness and cultural awareness, it is not surprising that the textbook accounts actually go out of their way, to varying degrees, to avoid this distortion and give Native cultures their due as self-sufficient and sophisticated. This is most readily evident in their portrayals of Columbus as an invader and, in several cases, plunderer. *America's Past and Promise* (Mason et al., 1997) relates an especially fine six-page account of the Columbus arrival. This perspective notes his "cruel conquest" (p.66) and his plot to enslave the Arawak people. Despite instructions to "treat the Indians very well and affectionately without causing them any annoyance whatever" (p.67), Columbus did exactly the reverse, demanding gold or cotton tribute, amputating the hands of those who failed to pay, and enslaving hundreds. His deceit and poor leadership were eventually uncovered and he was summarily stripped of his authority. Fittingly, he died an embittered man, but more importantly his former hero of myth image is laid bare.

Similarly, *The American Nation* (Davidson and Stoff, 1995) is representative of the higher-rated texts in at least attempting to depict an accurate and fair cultural exchange that does not demean the achievements and contributions of Native cultures. This Columbian Exchange included food, medicine, political structures, sports, the arts,

language, farming, domestic animals, technology, and, unfortunately, disease (This latter exchange, which of course proved tragically detrimental to Native populations, is a common element found in all of the textbooks). The true influence of the exchange is underscored by this text which uses the following as both a summary of its initial overview and a springboard leading to further cultural delineations/exchanges and the influence on Native cultures on Euro-American culture, an influence of greater proportion than is unfortunately only inferred here:

In time, all Native Americans felt the effects of European conquest. Still, despite attacks on their cultures, Native Americans survived throughout the Americas. They preserved many traditions, including a respect for nature. Native Americans sought to live in harmony with the natural world. If that harmony was disrupted, they believed, misfortune would result. Today, many people share the same concern for the natural world (p.57).

Note that the passage relates that Native cultures changed as a result of their encounter with Europeans. But none of the texts fully explore how European cultures changed as a result of encounters with Native cultures, that acculturation was a two-way avenue with significant Native contributions to the global economy. The modern world owes some debt to Native contributions but only three of the textbooks mention any such contributions (and food seems to be the main focus).

Summary and Conclusions

This study examined twelve current (1991-1998) American history textbooks of varying scopes presently or recently utilized in Indiana in order to evaluate their depth and accuracy in depicting Native American cultures. The criteria included an

authenticity guideline based upon the Five Great Values and their numerous subcategories. These values/headings included: generosity and sharing; respect for the elderly and women; getting along with nature; individual freedom; and courage. The guideline has been previously used to evaluate cultural accuracy in trade books but should not be construed as implying uniformity among Native cultures. Employing an evaluation scale between zero (lowest) and five (highest), the ratings ranged from one to four as noted in Table 1. The higher-rated texts featured accurate and comprehensive depictions of aspects found in at least four of the five headings, while the satisfactory-rated texts featured depictions in at least three headings. The poorly-rated texts featured depictions in one or two headings but with brevity, lack of depth, and/or stereotypes.

The textbooks shared several commonalities. To varying degrees, each indexed either Native Americans or Indians, including individuals, tribes, and cultures. They all featured a generic set of individuals and events. All of them presented an early overview format of Native cultures that varied from comprehensive to sketchy. Perhaps most noteworthy was quantity: the textbooks devoted much more line-by-line information and photos/drawings about Native cultures and individuals than previous texts of the 1970s and 1980s. In point of fact, the coverage for all major racial/ethnic/gender groups was increased. This, however, raised the question of quantity versus quality, which was the thrust of this study.

Generally, the accounts presented in the top seven textbooks are an improvement in terms of depth and accuracy. This is especially true in the subcategories of the Third Great Value (Getting Along With Nature) which focused upon the respectful portrayal of spirituality, language, authentic garb, and accurate information on dwellings. Gender

roles and leadership were also accurately depicted along with links to delineated and contemporary cultures. Yet these accounts still contain too many unexplained generalizations, omissions, and other inaccuracies. Some may consider the errors small. For example, *The American Nation* (Davidson and Stoff, 1995) inexplicably refers to "Blackfoot" (p.43) twice. The correct term is "Blackfeet," which is used an additional seven times on the same page. In terms of an accurate accounting, however, such errors should not be made.

Improved as these accounts may be, the fact remains that only three of the twelve selected textbooks do at best an acceptable job of depicting Native peoples within the scope of the American experience in a truthful, accurate, and objective manner. They are far from being perfectly dependable (if such is possible for a textbook) and though they are better than previously evaluated textbooks (Costo and Henry, 1970; Loewen, 1995), they have not heeded the warnings posed by Loewen (1995) in many respects. It must be concluded that the textbooks in this sample are still not sufficiently relating an accurate and comprehensive account of the Native Experience. As first noted by Costo and Henry and later supported by Loewen, this sample indicates that the situation, despite some noted improvements, has not significantly changed. In this era of heightened multicultural sensitivity, instructional materials such as textbooks need to make further gains; even an adequate treatment is unacceptable in portraying a cultural group that has had and has such a significant historical impact. While stereotypes, tokenism, distortion, and omission have been reduced, enough still prevail to warrant more attention to depicting Native peoples as unique in terms of culture, garb, language, and customs, as individual members of complex and sophisticated cultures represented by a continuity of

accurately described values developed in the past and sacredly linked to the present, admired and respected for their accomplishments, self-determination, and contributions.

But often, authors, consultants, illustrators, and publishers operate under constraints regarding content, format, and interpretations, with the bulk of consideration geared toward marketing and adoption (Fitzgerald, 1979). Original manuscripts are altered and edited by editors who for the most part are not aware of content inaccuracies. The result of the process is an assembly line of textbooks that must competitively resemble one another in format, style, and content, with the prime objective obviously being successful marketing toward adoption committees and varied special interest groups (English, 1980).

These issues aside, educators still face a continual challenge of providing accurate information which in too many arenas lies solely within a single source. Granted, it is the educator's responsibility to expand his/her knowledge base, an endeavor that will help uncover distortions, stereotypes, and misconceptions (Sanchez, 1997b). Not all educators, however, take seriously the mission of accurate cultural depictions, taking for granted that because information is in the textbook, it must certainly be true (Fitzgerald, 1979). This problem will persist as long as social studies educators rely on the textbook as the single source of knowledge.

Some suggestions to remedy this situation are in order. As forementioned special interest groups themselves, cultural groups such as Native peoples have spoken up and demanded a more balanced, in-depth, and accurate representation in American society and American textbooks. Along with similar demands from other racial/ethnic groups, this endeavor has been set in motion with a general degree of success. But as this

analysis suggests, a better job must be done of promoting accuracy and the politically weak position of Native peoples is not a strong enough voice.

Other voices must speak up, namely those of social studies educators who have an increasingly powerful input on textbook selection. If a textbook's treatment of a culture is inadequate in terms of accuracy and depth, publishers are more prone to heed the voices of those who adopt their books, but only if educators/adoption committees demand it and are blatantly willing to seek those publishers who do. The key is to first influence those who adopt the textbooks rather than those who publish them. The latter will likely "come around" when competing publishers who do provide the necessary and expected accuracy and depth are instead pursued. This, however, could very well be a pipe dream. As Loewen (1995) noted, "textbook publishers rarely do anything that they *imagine* might risk state disapproval. Therefore, they never stray far from the traditional textbooks in form, tone, and content (p.275)." Thus, new editions uniformly replace the old but are basically unchanged. Virtual clones appear annually but offer little that is new, controversial, refreshing, comprehensive, or accurate.

The crucial aspect still lies in the social studies educator's enlightenment on bias, distortion, omission, and stereotyping in order to assist their acquisition of knowledge, familiarity with Native cultures, and the accurate perceptions and values that influence them (Sanchez, 1997b). Remaining apathetic or ignorant of inaccuracies and lack of depth will obviously and by necessity encourage the ready acceptance of information that can only perpetuate misconceptions.

Evaluation of history textbooks such as this one can provide essential data to those who would adopt and utilize texts. A systematic evaluation of texts has long been

advocated but has not materialized (Fitzgerald, 1979). The leading social studies journals are the perfect base for such reviews, but this would naturally call for the National Council for the Social Studies to take the initiative of devoting frequent thematic attention to informing educators on the inadequate treatments found in selected textbooks. Providing such information can only assist those who are seriously interested in teaching the full story. This approach may also be a mission of state councils, such as the proposed lesson and textbook evaluation system currently being planned by the Indiana Council for the Social Studies (3).

We must therefore take some risks. We must risk seeking accurate and comprehensive cultural knowledge. If that knowledge is basically confined to textbooks, we must risk evaluating their depictions for accuracy. We must further risk demanding balanced and accurate treatments if they fail to articulate the true story. Such endeavors will also allow us to not only select and utilize the best available textbooks but also to correct the myths and stereotypes of a culture that merits our sensitivity, understanding, and respect.

My grandchildren, I am glad that you... are seeking to learn the beliefs, the customs, and the practices of our people, for those have too long been alive only within the memories of the Old Ones. I am glad that you are asking, for it has always been the custom for us to tell what must be passed on so that our ways will be known to the... children of the future (Broker, 1983, p.27).

Endnotes

1. This point was the focus of a round table discussion involving the author and several other researchers at the Race Unity Conference held at Purdue University Calumet in Hammond, IN, in the fall of 1993.
2. In order to establish interscorer reliability, a detailed presentation of the Values and their numerous subcategories was given to fifteen educators at a Purdue University teacher's conference on March 1, 1997. The educators were asked to utilize the authenticity guideline to evaluate a number of trade books and related instructional materials. A forum featuring the results indicated that the guideline produced consistent evaluations across the boards. A second presentation to a 27-teacher elementary school faculty on April 5 produced the same consistent results. Content/construct validity of the guideline was established by Professor Jill May, an expert on children's literature who has published several pieces on Native Americans, and Dr. Gayle Reiten, who first introduced me to the Values through her mentor and friend, Art Raymond, the Director of Indian Program Development and Native history instructor at the University of North Dakota. Dr. Raymond used the framework of the Great Values in his teaching. The origins of the Great Values are based upon the work of Dr. John F. Bryde in a now out-of-print book entitled *Modern Indian Psychology* (1971, Institute of Indian Studies: University of South Dakota Press). Dr. Reiten has frequently used my revised guideline in her capacity as an administrator in a BIA school in New Mexico.
3. ICSS is currently planning to market selected lesson plans spanning the disciplines of the social studies to its members. It is also considering making available selected

textbook evaluations such as this one to state adoption committees and interested educators.

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Table 1

Textbook Data and Authenticity Ratings

Textbook Title	Author	Date	Rating
The Americans	Danzer, Klor de Alva, Wilson, and Woloch	1998	4
The American Nation	Davidson & Stoff	1995	4
America's Past and Promise	Mason, Garcia, Powell, and Risinger	1997	4
America: The People and the Dream	Devine, Breen, Fredrickson, and Williams	1991	3
American History: The Early Years to 1877	Ritchie & Broussard	1997	3
History of the United States: Beginnings to 1877	Mason, Jacobs & Ludlum	1997	3
Why We Remember: United States History Through Reconstruction	Viola	1997	3
America: Pathways to the Present- Civil War to the Present	Cayton, Perry & Winkler	1995	2
Exploring American History	O'Connor	1994	2
American History: The Modern Era Since 1865	Ritchie	1997	1
The American Nation	Boyer	1995	1
The American Nation in the 20th Century	Boyer & Stuckey	1998	1

The Native Cultures Authenticity Guideline

The First Great Value: GENEROSITY AND SHARING

1. Are the many bounties of Mother Earth shared?
2. Do the Native American characters share their personal possessions?
3. Do they give/share selflessly and freely for the benefit of others?
4. Are they presented as uniquely separate individuals as well as members of the group?
5. Are they encouraged by family, friends, tribe, etc., to develop and share their talents for the benefit of others?
6. Are children portrayed as "being taken care of" by family, relatives and non-relatives?

The Second Great Value: RESPECT FOR THE ELDERLY AND WOMEN

1. Are male/female elders shown proper respect for their wisdom?
2. Are elders portrayed as appropriate role models with whom the younger can identify?
3. Are the younger depicted learning from the elders, especially through storytelling?
4. Are elders portrayed speaking to the younger without interruption?
5. Are women depicted as integral and important, instead of detached and subservient mothers and wives?

The Third Great Value: GETTING ALONG WITH NATURE

1. Are Native Americans depicted respecting the sacred natural harmony of and with nature without the stereotype of being "compulsively ecological?"
2. Is it properly depicted that the land was forcibly taken away from them?
3. Is the humanness of Native Americans recognized, i.e., laughing, playing games, enjoying life with family and friends, the extended family unit teaching love and responsibility, etc.?
4. Is a language of respect utilized, i.e., avoidance of offensive and stereotypic terminology?
5. Are they portrayed as speaking "broken" English?
6. Are there references to entities possessing a spirit or power to be respected?
7. Is spirituality respectfully portrayed, or is it referred to as superstitious, meaningless, or trivialized ceremonies, dances, songs, or "war whoops?"
8. Are they depicted with a wide range of physical features, avoiding the "Red Man in braids" stereotype?
9. Are they dressed in authentic garb, or are they all wearing feathers and breechcloths regardless of the culture?
10. Are they dressed in modern mainstream garb, depending upon the setting?
11. Do they have stereotyped surnames or authentic translations, including "European" names?

12. Are ceremonial artifacts correctly depicted and explained, such as fetishes, medicine bundles, the wearing of turquoise and silver, the medicine pipe (not "peace pipe), sand paintings, etc.
13. Are they portrayed eating a variety of foods and using utensils or just their hands?
14. Is accurate information provided about dwellings (hogans, long houses, tipis, wickiups, wigwams, etc.), duties of adults and children, ceremonies (the Sun Dance, the Green Corn Dance, the Mixed Kachina Dance, etc.) and practices (the passage to adulthood, healing ceremonies, etc.)?
15. Are they portrayed as contemporary people and not a past people who vanished and no longer exist?

The Fourth Great Value: INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM AND LEADERSHIP

1. Are Native Americans portrayed as freely choosing an action for the benefit of others?
2. Are they depicted accepting responsibility for the consequences of a chosen action or decision?
3. Is the leadership of the tribe properly depicted via the power of the Tribal Council (and the important role that women usually played in it) and multiple chiefs?

The Fifth Great Value: COURAGE

1. Is the courage of individuals heroically depicted as an individual choice and effort to give to one's people, or is it referred to as "fanatic, savage, massacre," etc.?
2. Are they humble in their exploits, never personally boasting?
3. Are they portrayed as stoic, not expressing emotion (unless around strangers), and perpetuating the always-serious stereotype?
4. Do they show a proper reverence for the gift of life?
5. Is there a distorted impression that non-Natives brought a "superior" civilization to the "inferior" Native Americans, thus demeaning Native cultures and omitting their achievements and contributions?

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. Is the author(s) identified as a true Native American?
2. Is there evidence that the non-Native author(s) consulted a Native American?
3. Do the illustrations and/or photographs accurately reflect specific tribal/cultural traditions, symbols, and/or art forms?

Question #	yes	no	n/a	Comments
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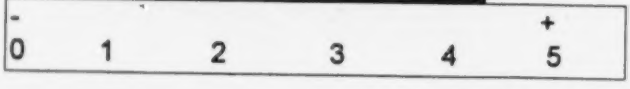
AUTHENTICITY EVALUATION:



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